

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 COME-00 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00 JUSE-00 /064 W

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R 130905Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6936

INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TOKYO 5338

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, JA

SUBJECT: LOCKHEED SCANDAL -- NAKASONE TESTIFIES

SUMMARY. IN TESTIMONY BEFORE LOCKHEED SPECIAL COMMITTEE APRIL 13, FORMER LDP SEC GEN NAKASONE DENIED ANY CONNECTION WITH LOCKHEED SCANDAL OR WITH GOJ DECISION NOT TO PRODUCE DOMESTICALLY ASW AIRCRAFT. OPPOSITION INTERROGATORS SUFFERED FROM LACK OF INFORMATION AND WERE UP AGAINST CONFIDENT, ARTICULATE NAKASONE WHO, MOST OBSERVERS BELIEVE, HANDLED HIMSELF VERY WELL AND MAY HAVE GONE LONG WAY IN CONVINCING PEOPLE OF HIS INNOCENCE. END SUMMARY.

1. LDP FACTION LEADER AND FORMER SECRETARY GENERAL YASUHIRO NAKASONE APPEARED BEFORE LOWER HOUSE LOCKHEED SPECIAL COMMITTEE APRIL 13 TO ANSWER QUESTIONS REGARDING HIS ROLE IN LOCKHEED SCANDAL. NAKASONE'S APPEARANCE WAS IN RESPONSE TO LONG-STANDING OPPOSITION DEMAND, WHICH LDP LEADERSHIP HAS RESISTED, AND WAS RESULT OF LAST MINUTE DECISION BY NAKASONE, HIMSELF, TO ATTEMPT TO ALLAY SUSPICIONS ABOUT HIS ROLE AROUSED BY SERIES OF MEDIA STORIES AND SPECIFIC ALLEGATIONS BY FORMER LOCKHEED CHAIRMAN KOTCHIAN THAT HE WAS INVOLVED.

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2. IN COURSE OF FOUR-HOUR INTERROGATION, NAKASONE FLATLY DENIED ANY CONNECTION WITH ANA DECISION TO PURCHASE LOCKHEED TRI-STARS

OR WITH GOJ DECISION NOT TO PRODUCE DOMESTICALLY ASW AIRCRAFT. HE DENIED CLOSE CONNECTION WITH RIGHT-WING STRONGMAN YOSHIO KODAMA OR WITH KENJI OSANO, ACKNOWLEDGING, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAD MET EACH ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS ON BUSINESS TOTALLY UNRELATED

TO AIRCRAFT PURCHASES. NAKASONE ACKNOWLEDGED RECEIVING POLITICAL FUNDS FROM MARUBENI TRADING COMPANY (LOCKHEED AGENT), BUT STRESSED THESE WERE NORMAL CONTRIBUTIONS; HE DISCLAIMED HAVING RECEIVED FUNDS FROM EITHER TANAKA OR KODAMA. ONLY NEW FACT REVEALED DURING COURSE OF TESTIMONY WAS THAT NAKASONE HAD BEEN QUESTIONED FOR TOTAL OF EIGHT HOURS BY PUBLIC PROSECUTORS LAST FALL, BUT HAD EVIDENTLY BEEN CLEARED OF ANY WRONGDOING.

3. COMMENT. OPPOSITION INTERROGATION, BASED ENTIRELY ON MEDIA SOURCES AND KOTCHIAN INTERVIEW WITH ASAHI, FAILED TO UNEARTH ANYTHING DAMAGING TO NAKASONE AND ILLUSTRATED DEARTH OF HARD EVIDENCE AVAILABLE. OPPOSITION PARTIES PUT UP SECOND STRING INTERPELLATORS WHO SUFFERED NOT ONLY FROM LACK OF INFORMATION, BUT ALSO IN COMPARISON TO SELF-CONFIDENT, ARTICULATE NAKASONE. THOUGH THERE IS SOME POSSIBILITY THAT UPPER HOUSE LOCKHEED COMMITTEE MAY ALSO WISH TO SUMMON NAKASONE, ODDS ARE THAT TODAY'S APPEARANCE WILL SUFFICE AND MAY BE FINAL CURTAIN ON DIET INVESTIGATION OF LOCKHEED AFFAIR. EVEN THOUGH SOME SUSPICION WILL REMAIN, OUR CONTACTS BELIEVE APPEARANCE WAS DECIDED PLUS FOR NAKASONE WHO, UNDER SUSPICION FOR MOST OF PAST YEAR, HAD BECOME ALMOST INVISIBLE IN DOMESTIC POLITICAL STRUGGLE. WHETHER THIS WILL GIVE HIM FREER HAND IN POST-UPPER HOUSE ELECTION PERIOD REMAINS TO BE SEEN.
SHOESMITH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
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TAGS: PINT, PINS, JA, LOCKHEED
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